

CDO Briefs

Leadership workshop gives strategy life

by CDO Council

One of 300 AFRL leaders who has attended the Strategic Leadership Workshop said, "This is the first time in my career I got the impression the boss really wanted to give his strategy life."

The AFRL Corporate Development Office designed this series of workshops, which is designed for supervisors, managers, team leaders and technical advisors, to help leaders understand their role in the future success of the laboratory. Leaders leave their workshop with a better appreciation for cross AFRL collaboration and realize that the lab's success depends on all facets of the organization working together towards a common vision.

The focus of the Workshop is on *leadership core competencies* – those skills, which are linked to the AFRL Corporate Strategy, that enable AFRL "to discover, develop, integrate and deliver affordable technologies for improved warfighting capabilities by leading a partnership of government, industry and academia to keep our Air Force the best in the world." AFRL Corporate Board members have recognized that there are leaders at all levels of the organization, responsible for transforming the good words of a corporate strategy into *real* technology, *real* programs and *real* capabilities, in spite of *real* resource constraints.

They also recognize that this is a *tough job* – one demanding a set of personal, interpersonal and strategy skills that must be consciously developed, matured and periodically reassessed if leaders are going to be effective in the quest.

Thus, the Strategic Leadership Workshop is designed as an interesting, safe forum for focusing time, energy and thought on leadership for the *real* world. This is a workshop, not a training course. Leaders from all parts of the organization interact with other AFRL leaders in discussions of key AFRL leadership issues. They focus on specific issues of concern to the lab and the people working in the lab.

Some of the questions leaders wrestle with during the

workshop are: How to really impact Air Force decision makers; What is the ideal workforce make-up needed to successfully meet customer requirements while still advancing technology?; What are the trends in business operations that will shape and impact how we do research and development in the future?

While firmly grounded in academic and professional leadership and organizational theory, the Strategic Leadership Workshop is *not* "Leadership 101." No one stands up to teach or preach because there are few one-size-fits-all approaches that work in our complex technical, organizational and security environment. Thinking, exploring and learning are encouraged through experiential activities including simulations, written instruments, small group discussions and the exploration of models. Some of these tools are Commercial Off-The-Shelf, others have been created/tailored to the AFRL environment.

The workshop was designed and developed by the AFRL CDO Council, a group of internal and external organizational development (OD) consultants from across the lab. The function of CDO Council is to act as a catalyst for ongoing corporate development and to serve as a unifying focal point of corporate development efforts across the directorates.

Each technical directorate has one internal Corporate Development Officer residing in the organization. These consultants along with the AFRL CDO office and two external OD consultants make up the AFRL CDO Council. They are a resource available to each person in AFRL.

The CDO Council has completed 11 of the 14 workshops scheduled for this year and have committed to conduct additional sessions in 2000. If you have questions about this workshop or other OD topics, contact your organizational CDO, they are here to help. @